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take the report of the Committee on Depreciation. After a great amount of correspondence and study, the committee prepared a report which was submitted at the Richmond convention, along with a minority report by one of its members. The subject was so important and the report was known to be the result of so much effort, that rather than take hasty action on it, the report was ordered printed and distributed to the members and placed on the program of the next convention for final discussion and action. But at St. Louis the matter had been so forgotten that no action was taken in accordance with the vote of the Association the year before, and the fact that the committee had been discharged at its own request at Richmond was overlooked. As a result one of the most important reports made to the Association still remains without action and existing only in pamphlet form.

This report was a subject of great interest at Richmond; it was a dead letter at St. Louis. What then should be the guide of the Publication Committee in determining matters of interest to the members of our Association? Letters from acquaintances tell what interests them; I know what interests me. But one man's circle is a small one; the Committee wishes to know what interests water works men all over the country, so it can make the JOURNAL a very live help to them, whether they are managing a small plant or managing the water supply of a great city. The Committee cannot send a letter of inquiry to every water works man in the country about this matter. But every member of the Association who feels that a live journal will be useful to him should let the Publication Committee know how it should be changed to make it more serviceable to him personally.

A. W. CUDDEBACK.

CONSERVATION OF WATER SUPPLY BY WATER WASTE PREVENTION INSPECTION

The participation of the United States in the World War has more forcibly than ever before impressed water works officials with the necessity of conservation of water supply. The federal authorities responsible for the prosecution of the war are daily urging the use of what was formerly wasted, to reduce the demand for labor and materials. The water consumption of communities is being studied to determine whether undue waste of water exists, and if so, a de-

mand is made to curtail such waste. Coal is to be allotted on the basis of the actual water needs of cities with waste stopped, as far as practicable. Whether our federal representatives have or have not taken action on the fuel allotment of a given community, all should be interested in water supply conservation for one of the following reasons:

a. To avoid shortage in supply, due to abnormal growth in consumption, on account of war activities.

b. To conserve fuel and labor, where pumping of the water is necessary.

c. To relieve the overload on delivery mains, filters and other essential parts of a water supply system which cannot be duplicated under war conditions.

Emphasis has in the past been, and is now being, laid on the use of meters to reduce the demands for water, by checking waste. Only slight effort has been made to direct attention to the excellent and almost immediate results in water waste prevention that can be obtained from house to house inspection. Under present labor and material conditions it is both difficult and expensive to obtain and set meters. By the expenditure of a small fraction of the labor necessary to install the meter, the premises can be examined and plumbing repaired, to prevent waste from leaks. It is estimated that in generally unmetered communities, water can be saved by a yearly inspection of the premises at a cost of approximately \$5 per million gallons. No additional water can be obtained at a price that even approaches this figure.

The water works superintendent should not neglect the possibilities of conserving his supply and reducing his operating expenses, through the periodical examination of plumbing within the houses. New York and Buffalo have recently found that many million gallons daily, and tens of thousands of dollars annually, are saved by the inspection of premises to detect and stop leaks. Men for this work may be readily trained and immediately secure results. By their use the careless, wasteful consumer is made to save the water that his careful and conscientious neighbor pays for.

It is not intended to create the impression that house to house inspection should be considered as a satisfactory permanent substitute for general metering. The measurement of and payment for water furnished can only be equitably based on records of meters attached to each premise. There is no water waste preventive

equal in efficiency to a meter, but there may be many reasons why meters cannot be installed. The examination of water fixtures by inspectors is now urged as a valuable aid in reducing water consumption during the period which must elapse before meters can generally be installed under the war time conditions existing in this country.

W. W. BRUSH.

WRITING FOR PUBLICATION

Every experienced superintendent is confident he can edit his favorite trade paper better than it is now edited, at least in some particulars. Yet the fact is that the publishers of trade papers, whose success depends upon their ability to produce publications which large numbers of specialists like enough to buy, use only a very small part of the information in the articles presented by these specialists before technical societies. Furthermore, there are only a very few technical societies which publish journals that even pay expenses, unless a wholly unreasonable proportion of the annual dues are assumed to be paid solely for the journals. The societies, such as the Society of Chemical Industry, which publish profitable journals, conduct this part of their activities precisely like the publishers of trade journals. Therefore it is reasonable to believe that the methods of editing a successful trade journal are worth explaining at this time to the members of the American Water Works Association, for our printers have been compelled to increase their charges for publishing our JOURNAL about one-third, and it is necessary to adopt more economic methods in preparing papers for presentation and publication, in order to keep well within the budget for printing expenses. Furthermore the War Industries Board has ordered the amount of paper used in the JOURNAL reduced about 20 per cent.

There are two entirely distinct classes of papers published by technical societies. The first class is essentially news; it describes work planned, or under construction, or done. The second class is scientific; it describes investigations, analyzes the reasons for success or failure of methods of design or construction, reviews the state of some particular art or practice, or discusses those principles of economics which underlie sound business administration.

News articles must be brief. Fifteen years ago, it was the practice, even in trade papers, to embalm the kernel of news in a husk of